

ANTHONY J. PREITE

BUSINESS & LABOR

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Anthony J. Preite, Montana Director of Commerce, was born and raised in Havre, Montana. He attended St. Jude's Grade School, Havre Central High School, and graduated from Northern Montana College in 1963. He taught government and social studies and was a coach/athletic director at Turner High School from 1964-1968.

In 1968, Mr. Preite accepted the position as Community Development Specialist with Bear Paw Development in Havre, Montana. His duties included coordinating area economic growth activities and implementing the overall Economic Development Plan for Hill, Blaine, and Liberty Counties and Fort Belknap and Rocky Boy's Indian Reservations in North Central Montana. He was elevated to Executive Director in 1969.

From 1971-1973, he worked in Seattle, Washington as Special Project Director (Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Arizona, and California) of the Economic Development Administration for the U.S. Department of Commerce. He was instrumental in the development of dozens of successful economic and community growth projects resulting in infrastructure improvements and the creation of hundreds of job opportunities in the multi-state area. In 1973, Mr. Preite returned to the Executive Director position with the Bear Paw Economic Development District.

In 1993, Mr. Preite was selected as the winner of the Forrest Koch Award for Excellence in Economic Development by the Denver Regional Office of the Economic Development Administration.

That same year, at the recommendation of Senator Max Baucus, Mr. Preite was appointed by President Clinton as the State Director of the Farmer's Home Administration in Montana. Through the U.S. Department of Agriculture Reorganization, legislation was passed and the agency name changed to USDA-Rural Development. In 1995, Mr. Preite received the U.S. Department of Agriculture Honor Award, one of the highest awards that the Secretary can bestow on an employee.

As Head of Rural Development, Mr. Preite supervised three departments, Rural Housing Service (RHS), serving communities and moderate to very low income families; Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBCS), providing business loans and guarantees; and Rural Utilities Services (RUS), benefiting communities and towns. These three departments have a Montana portfolio of almost half a billion dollars. In 1997, Mr. Preite was chosen as the Outstanding Fifty State U.S.D.A. Director. This was the first time U.S.D.A. made the prestigious award.

In December of 1999, Mr. Preite was selected as the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration Denver Regional Office Director, a Nation-wide competitive Senior Executive Service position. As Regional Director, he supervised activities in ten Western and Mid-Western states.

In October of 2003, Mr. Preite was appointed as Director of Space Commercialization and Development Outreach by the University of Montana in Missoula. In November of 2004, Mr. Preite was selected by Governor-elect Brian Schweitzer to become Director of the Montana Department of Commerce.

In May 2008, he received the Montana State University Northern "Founders Excellence Award".

Mr. Preite has served as President of the Montana Economic Development Association and as Chairman of the Governor's Economic Development Council. He was a Board Director of the Montana Private Industry Development Council, a member of the National Association of Development Organizations, and member of the Senior Executive Service, as well as numerous other organizations.

Mr. Preite and his wife Betty reside in Helena, Montana. They have a son Robert and wife Barbara of Salt Lake City, Utah, and a daughter Julie and husband Randy Tilleman of Spokane, Washington. They have four grandchildren: Anthony, Annelise, Dominic, and Emelia.